The Seed Sower.

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A New Year Ditty.

New Year met me somewhat sad;
Old year leaves me tired,
Stripp'd of favourite things I had,
Baulked of much desired.
Yet further on my road to-day,
God willing, further on my way.

New Year coming on apace,
What have you to give me?
Bring you scathe or bring you grace,
Face us with an honest face;
You shall not deceive me:
Be it good or ill, be it what you will,
My rugged way to heaven, please God.

A Wintry Sonnet!

A Robin said, "Spring will never come,
And I shall never care to build again."
A Rosebush said, "These frosts are wearisome,
My sap will never stir for sun or rain."
The Half-Moon said, "These nights are fogged and slow,
I neither care to wax nor care to wane."
The Ocean said, "I thirst from long ago,
Because earth's rivers cannot fill the main"
When spring-time came, red Robin built a nest,
And trill'd a lover's song in sheer delight.
Gray hoarfrost vanished, and the rose with might
Clothed her in leaves and buds of crimson core;
The dim moon brightened, ocean sunned his crest,
Dimpled in blue, yet thirsted evermore.

CHRISTINE ROSSETTI.

Winter.

SERMON BY L. P. JACKS, M.A.

(PREACHED IN NOVEMBER.)

PSALM LXXIV. 17.

"Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter."

Only a few leaves still flutter on the branches, and these will go in the next high wind. The glory of the trees lies on the ground in sodden masses, which exhale an odour of death. The colour of the earth is brown more than green. The ways are foul, and water lies in pools among the furrows of the ploughed fields. Gardens have entered upon their least interesting period. The birds are silent, except for the chirp of the sparrow, the thin song of the robin, or the quick staccato of the blackbird, as he goes to his five o'clock roost. Winter is here.

Every grown-up person, I believe, feels at least a tinge of melancholy as the summer glory dies. It seems so short a time since we were watching the first buds of spring, or inhaling the scent of new-mown hay, or listening to the reaper in the corn. Like a thief in the night was the coming and the going of summer—short and swift. It is pleasant to think, however, that as was the swiftness of summer, so will be the swiftness of winter. We must be up and doing, or the

opportunity for our winter plans will have passed, and the time will have come when people say, "the long days are come, and it is too late to begin anything now." But in spite of the comfort of knowing that if winter comes spring cannot be far behind, there must needs be a little sickness of heart—just a wave of sentimental sadness, when we think of the glory that is departed, of the beauty that is dead.

But in none of us is the sadness either very deep or of long duration. Winter has its interests, in which we soon find more than a compensation for all we lose through the departure of summer. Moreover, it has a physical charm which is all its own. I am not alluding to what men call "fireside happiness," though that, too, is one of the best of God's gifts. But on the score of natural beauty alone winter is full of delights, which are none the less dear to the lover of nature, but all the dearer, because of the grey and sober colours in their attire. It is a strange fact, and one which betrays a narrow range of sensibilities, that those among our poets who celebrate the natural beauties of winter, almost invariably fix their attention on the frost and snow. And on a lower plane we have all noticed, perhaps with a certain sense of weariness, how the writers of Christmas stories, and the illustrators of Christmas papers, seem tied down by a narrow and tyrannous tradition, to a background of hoar frost and icicles. They, of course, do but reflect the popular taste, according to which no work of imagination is seasonable during winter except it presuppose an atmosphere of biting cold. And of course there is one type of winter beauty, and one class of winter pleasures which do depend on these conditions. But there are others which have no such dependence, beauties into which snow-whiteness enters not, pleasures which have nothing to do with the physical reaction against cold, and it is a thousand pities that so many persons are apparently blind to these. After all, our English winters are of such a sort that hard frost is rather the exception than the rule. We may go for months with never a sight of snow, and with only just enough cold to necessitate a fire indoors. In these mild winters, in these mild parts of all winters, is there no beauty in the world for us to enjoy? Surely there is. Take such weather as we had during the past week, when all night long the wild west wind has coursed through an angry, troubled sky. In the intervals of sleep we have heard it, not without a sense of security, beating vehemently upon the house, and when dawn has broken, we have looked forth to the heavens and found nothing but a grey canopy of racing cloud. All morning the rain has come and gone, and we have listened to the swish of the waters and the scurrying of the blast. But towards noon a keener light begins to fall, soon a great rift is torn in the sky, the grey clouds turn to white, and rolling themselves into wonderful masses, sail away into space like swift and noble ships. How superb is the brief afternoon that follows. There is a purity in the heavens that is well nigh awful to look upon. I think there is nothing in nature more lovely than the cleanliness of winter skies when the west wind has washed them. Nor is there any light so soft and sweet as that which falls on the earth at these times, unless indeed it be the light of a winter dawn. And then what a welcome freshness in the air! What winds of summer have the qualities of these winter gales, pouring round us their clear and crystal streams, laden, not indeed with the perfumes of the hawthorn or the scent of the hay, but with vigour borrowed from the ocean waves, with an earthy sweetness sucked up from the good brown soil. And when night falls, after a day of stormy weather, who shall say that the beauty of the winter world is then at an end? If a man would taste the joy of being alive, let him take a country walk in the early hours of a long winter night. First let him watch the great cloud bastions that mask the setting sun—the sublime architecture of the storm. And then, when the twilight has quickly gone, let him feel what is more wonderful almost than any object revealed by the light—the composure that resides in darkness. It is in the long nights of winter, when we know that night has come to stay, that the open heavens pour their deepest rest, their most peaceful silence, into our spirits. The darkness then seems to possess an individuality of its own—it is something more than the mere absence of light, it is a positive power, filling us with quiet joy and perhaps with a tranquil clearness of thought such as comes at no other time. We may thank the darkness for this, that though it takes from us the vision of

the Universe, it leaves us, nevertheless, with the feeling that the Universe is round about us. And of the two states of mind that is the higher. Often during the bright days of summer we see the vastness of the Universe without feeling it. But during the long nights of winter, as we walk on hour after hour, bathed in the wind and surrounded by the silence, we feel that vastness without seeing it, and enter deeper and deeper into the majesty, the strength, the enduring wonder of the world.

Another of the delights of winter is that then alone you can enjoy the full richness of the colours of the earth. During summer these colours are almost entirely hidden by the vegetation. This vegetation, in all its varied forms and hues of flower and leaf, is charged with the most exquisite pleasure for sense and soul, the mere memory of which is a kind of benediction; and the withering of all this loveliness in autumn is the chief source of whatever sadness we may feel at that time. But when the flowers die and the leaves fall they do not leave us comfortless. They take farewell of the world—not mourning but rejoicing, not inviting us to weep over their departure but bidding us be of good cheer, not in their saddest attire but in their gayest, decked in scarlet and gold, as though the decay that awaits them were no humiliation and no evil, but rather a gate of honour through which they would proudly pass on to the general ministries of the universe. And when that glory has passed away we become aware of other colours, those of the brown earth, the grey rocks, the blackly-stencilled trees and hedges—colours which in themselves are not pleasing, but which in combination, and seen under the soft and tender light of a winter sun, and with the storm-washed blue of the heavens for background, are full of a subtle but irresistible charm. I heard a distinguished man, a true lover of nature, who lives in the Lake country, once remark what an infinite pity it was that the public knew that district only in its summer dress. Asked his reason for the remark, his answer was—"Because the earth colours are only visible in winter." And in addition to the earth colours, there are the earth odours—the scent which the upturned soil imparts to moisture-laden winds. An American gentleman who has passed a winter in England, wrote last year from his ice-bound home in Northern Maine—"Here it is very beautiful. The air is clear but intensely cold. We have uninterrupted sunshine day after day. But what would I not give to get that whiff of the sweet earth which I so well remember in your English winter. There is nothing I can recall more vividly, and nothing the memory of which so quickly brings the whole of my life in England back again."

These, then, are some of the less celebrated, but not less real, charms of winter beauty. Let us look out for them as we take our walks abroad, in the sure faith that every new discovery we make of beautiful things, and every moment spent in the enjoyment of their loveliness, is so much permanent gain to life and so much added power to do our duty and bear our burdens in those places where no beauty is to be seen. And let us bear them in mind when we draw the parallel which is so often drawn between the decline of the year in winter and the decline of life in old age. Keats spoke of old age as a time when "palsy shakes a few last thin grey hairs." He was evidently thinking of the chill and the frost. In imagination he saw a shrouded figure shivering in the cold—vainly seeking to keep its life blood warm. That was his figure of old age. But if the parallel between old age and winter holds at all, it must extend to other elements besides the frost and the snow. It might be drawn, and I think much more truly, by forgetting those features of ice and frost which are everybody's commonplace, and thinking rather of the profound peacefulness which accompanies a winter dawn, of that calm and exquisite light which glorifies the west on a winter afternoon, of that solemn silence which makes the darkness of a winter night into a thing of power. And if anyone should sadly cry out against this manner of drawing the parallel, if he should say, "it is in the cold of winter that the likeness lies, for cold and age both lead up to death," if, I say, anyone should prefer this reading of the figure, let me ask him to ponder the similitude a moment longer. In the cold of winter the world is sleeping, but is not dead. Beneath the heaviest shroud of snow, and even when held in the tightest grip of ice, the state of every bud and seed is a state but of rest. The earth is recuperating. It is laying in a store: concentrating its energy

inwards for a new burst of life. Be it then as you say. Old age is just such another recuperation and rest of the inward source of life. The shows of things vanish from its regards, as the leaves fall from the trees: the power to control them wanes, the capacity to be interested in them passes away like the verdure of the fields; but in the pause that succeeds the soul makes ready for the spring.

O wind,
If winter comes, can spring be far behind?

"Marah." *

"They called it Marah: nor can words express
More bitterness."

With an extraordinary insistence, these two lines of the late Lord Lytton's have been pursuing the present writer during and since his perusal of a recent anonymous volume, entitled the "Autobiography of a Child." A sadder book, yet one more unmistakeably stamped with truth, than this record of a little girl's life from her fifth to her twelfth year, we can hardly recall to our memory. It is a narrative singularly free from any straining after effects, for the most part of a sobriety—by which we do not mean dulness—doubly remarkable since the narrator is of Irish blood; and yet again and again, on reading the dispassionately-worded recital of some incident or other, we inwardly exclaimed that "speech could not express more bitterness."

Of late years, a somewhat large literature devoted to the study of child-life has grown up, numbering amongst its contributors writers more or less artistic, more or less clear-sighted, more or less acquainted at first hand with child-psychology; the names of authors so variously gifted as Professor James Sully, R. L. Stevenson, Mrs. Meynell, Kenneth Grahame, and others rise readily to one's mind. Generally speaking, it is safe to assert that the child now-a-days is more carefully studied, better understood, and more truthfully represented in fiction than ever before; and yet we cannot help suspecting—fearing—that some of those who devote their pens to the portrayal of childhood are mastered by and ministering to a taste for the pretty-pretty to which they are in danger of sacrificing the intention of truth—a defect notably apparent in Mr. Crockett's "Sweetheart Travellers" and not entirely absent even from Mr. Canton's otherwise delightful "W. V., Her Book" and "The Invisible Playmate." There is observable, to put it more plainly, a tendency to get away from reality, and view the subject from the standpoint indicated with admirable irony by Stevenson:

"It is very nice to think
The world is full of meat and drink,
With little children saying grace,
In every Christian kind of place."

"It is very nice to think;" but what of the sufferings, the heart-sorenesses, the sense of injustice, the positive ill-treatment, which form the lot of hapless childhood, such griefs as have been imaginatively portrayed for us by Olive Schreiner, and as are here laid bare in this terrible "Autobiography of a Child?" Not nice to think of at all, these, yet just as true as the other side of the picture, and quite as necessary for us to realise and ponder over.

It may be readily conceded that the heroine of this story was very unusually circumstanced. Her father had died before her birth, and her mother—whom she alludes to on her very first page as "a handsome, cold-eyed woman who did not love me"—was possessed of a temperament which, for want of a better word, we must call unnatural. This bearer of many children to her first and second husband, was, to quote the words of poor Rita Allmers in *Little Eyolf*, "fitted only to *become* a mother, and not to *be* one." Hers was "an implacable passion to wound, to strike the smile from the little faces around her, to silence a child's laughter with terror of herself. Children seemed to inspire her with a vindictive animosity, with a fury for beating and banging them—against walls, against chairs, upon the ground—in a way that it seems miraculous to me now how they were saved from the grave and she from the dock." We are told of ill-treatment so outrageous that "one of the servants—a delicate, fair young man—rushed upstairs scarlet with indignation, and tore me from my mother's hands. I have forgotten what he said, but he gave her notice on the spot in order to express himself more freely." We honour this "fair young man," and regret that

* "Autobiography of a Child." Blackwood, 1899.

in Dublin there existed in the sixties no association similar in function to the N.S.P.C.C.

The writer's first few years were lived in the country, a few miles from the city, with kindly Irish peasants among whom she spent her happiest days — days whose happiness suffered interruption only during interviews with her mother; but at an early age she was removed from her beloved foster-parents to her "home," and the chapter relating to her life there is simply and appropriately headed "Martyrdom," inflicted by mother and sisters alike. "Oh, what tears I shed in that strange home! To have cried in childhood as I cried then . . . without a hand to dry my eyes, a kiss to comfort me, a soft breast against which I could rest my tired little head and sob out my tale of sorrow—this is to start permanently maimed for the battle of life. What compensation can the years bring us for such injustice? Could any possible future paradise make up to us for infancy in hell?"

A crisis of revolt was bound to come, when the child, spurned and ill-used beyond endurance by one of her sisters, retaliated in kind; and very pitiful is the story of her flight from the house, of her adventures at the Police Station among the kindly giants of the Force, and her recovery by her good-natured but ineffective stepfather. Her sentence was nothing less than banishment —transportation to an English convent in Warwickshire, where she was to pass the next few years of her life. For unaffected pathos we know of few pieces of writing that surpass the description of the little girl's sense of desolation and vague dread of the unknown, when brought on board ship—"a child with a home, a mother, a family, cast adrift on a grey winter's sea, travelling from one land to another, like a valueless packet, given in charge to a stranger!"

Her arrival at the Convent opens a new chapter, though hardly one more comforting to read about. As to the treatment meted out to the girls under their care by the strangely misnamed Ladies of Mercy, the writer tells us deliberately, with the absence of passion resulting from thirty intervening years, that its leading characteristics were "incompetence, ignorance, cruel stupidity, and futile vexation," not to speak of systematic underfeeding. She speaks of her sojourn there as of "five years of perpetual passion and frantic unhappiness," and her recital of childish woes certainly bears out her verdict. The environment, however, changed her character: "Little Angela of Dublin and Kildare was a pallid and pathetic creature. But Angela of Lysterby held her own—more even than her own—for she fought for others as well as for herself, and gave back as much pain and affliction as she endured."

We have space only to allude to one episode of her Convent life, a rebellion on her part against a false and treacherous accusation made against her by one of the nuns, Sister Esmeralda, whose description is worth quoting as a piece of word-painting. "The Grand Inquisitor was a lovely slim young nun, with a dainty gipsy face, all brown and golden, full-cheeked, pink-lipped, black-browed. I see her still, the exquisite monster, with her long slim fingers, as delicate as ivory, and the perfidious witchery of her radiant dark smile." So unbearable did her mocking, fiendish persecution become, that on one occasion Angela, in a paroxysm of injury, and with the strength of rage, hurled a chair full at her head. What followed it would be hard to believe, but for the author's convincing manner of narrating her calamities. This frail, delicate girl of eight was stripped naked, and scourged with a three-pointed whip, till the blood gushed from the long stripes—deep, red, open wounds that had to be dressed into scars by lint and sweet oil and herbs—and she fainted. Such were the gentle methods of these "ladies devoted to the worship of mercy, and of Mary, the maiden of sorrow, the mild mother of humanity!"

We should like to speak of Angela's first confession—during which she swooned in terror—and to reproduce her sensible criticisms on the subject of children's confessions, the morbid state induced in the little ones by the course of preparation, their wonder whether they had committed this or that impossible sin; but we must not linger over these and allied topics.

Let not the reader suppose that Angela is or was by nature a pessimist or a prig, with an incorrigibly gloomy outlook and a habit of magnifying her sorrows. On the contrary, in this book she shows, in place of self-absorption, a gift of acute and sympathetic observation, and sketches for us, often in a few strokes, a surprisingly large gallery

of portraits—figures like her friend Mary Jane, her brother Stevie (the short-lived hero of another tragedy—crippled through the carelessness of a tipsy nurse), her "music-daft" Grandfather Cameron, her boyish admirer Louie, the shabby-souled Mr. Parker, the dancing master, poor Molly O'Connell, doomed by her beauty and carefully fostered ignorance, dear Mother Aloysius, a real saint, Angela's adventurous cousin Edmond, whose brilliant gifts alcohol absorbed and tarnished, and whose bones lie scattered at far-off Khartoum, and dozens more besides. The author has that rare artistic gift, vision, and by the vividness of her realisation of human character makes others see as vividly as herself. There are in this volume of three hundred pages distinctive types enough to keep the ordinary weaver of plots going for years.

Nor in this sad book are there touches of humour wanting. The pages telling us of the four youngsters'—Angela's and her younger sisters'—curious and precocious passion for whist are delightfully quaint and funny. Picture to yourselves four little night-dressed girls gathered together at dawn in one bed, with the lid of a bandbox over their joined knees, rapturously playing whist! Again, what a lively escapade is the children's ball, held in the absence of their parents, the unexpected return of the latter, the ineffectual ruses, the precipitate flight of the "guests"—and the bad quarter-of-an-hour that followed! But these episodes, and the author's shrewd remarks on things Irish, cannot efface the general impression of sombre pitifulness.

Let us close with two characteristic extracts. "How grossly and wickedly mismanaged children are by people who do not think or stop to study them! So many tears and tremors and moments of black despair, because angry and impatient persons will not take the trouble to use the right words and correct with justice and sense. To abuse an ignorant little child in disproportionate language, at an age when imagination exaggerates and magnifies everything, for an impulsive action and an inconsequent error, and tell her 'she would catch it,' is surely a hideous perversion of strength and power." And, "These are trifles to read of, but what is a trifle in childhood? A child feeds greedily upon its own excesses of sensation—thrives upon them or is consumed by them. To these early terrors, these accumulated emotions, these swift alternations of anguish and rapture without transition, do I attribute the nervous illnesses that have so remorselessly pursued me in after years. The wonder is, the mind itself did not give way."

An exceptionally unhappy childhood altogether, lonely and unloved; yet nothing in these pages is more sorrowful to read of than what the author calls the depth of her physical antipathy to her mother, from whose very glance she used to shrink—an antipathy which, in the throes of every illness, made her moan whenever her mother approached her, "Don't touch me! Oh! Don't touch me!" What a tragedy in this one sentence, describing her earliest recollections of babyhood: "I burst into a passion of tears, not because of the fall, *but from terror at finding myself so near my mother!*"

Where grow the leaves that shall sweeten these waters of Marah?

J. WARSCHAUER.

Biographical Addresses.

By THE LATE REV. DR. SADLER.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

PART II.

It is characteristic of Jeremy Taylor as a thinker, that he anticipated some of those enlarged and enlightened opinions which are usually supposed to belong to modern times. In an age in which all denominations seem to have thought they were doing God service by strong measures against those whom they held to be in error, he was a firm and zealous opponent of persecution. He was a Broad Churchman more than two centuries ago, when Broad Churchmen were not so numerous as they are now. In his "Liberty of Prophesying" or preaching, he advocates simple conditions of church membership, a spirit of comprehensiveness, and a large allowance for conscientious differences. He liked, he said, to walk on the "king's highway." It is sometimes stated that his tone changed after power passed into his own hands; but my own belief is that his essential principles con-

tinued the same, and that in his application of them his altered circumstances changed him far less than they would have done most men. He was always an advocate for toleration, for conciliation, and for not letting difference in religion be made a ground of oppression or injustice. The apologue at the close of the "Liberty of Prophesying" is so characteristic of the book that though it is so well known, I shall repeat it here. He says he found it among the Jews' books; but as no one knew it there arose a suspicion that it was really his own. It has, however, since been traced to the Persian poet, Saadi: "When Abraham sat at his tent-door, according to his custom, waiting to entertain strangers, he espied an old man, a hundred years of age, stooping and leaning on his staff, weary with age and travel, coming towards him. He received him kindly, washed his feet, provided supper, and caused him to sit down; but, observing that the old man ate without praying or begging a blessing on his meat, asked him why he did not worship the God of heaven? The old man told him that he worshipped the fire only, and acknowledged no other God; at which answer Abraham grew so zealously angry that he thrust the old man out of his tent, and exposed him to all the evils of the night, and an unguarded condition. When the old man was gone, God called to Abraham and asked him where the stranger was. He replied, 'I thrust him away because he did not worship thee.' God answered him: 'I have suffered him these 100 years, although he dishonoured me, and could'st thou not endure him one night, when he gave thee no trouble?' Upon this, says the story, Abraham fetched him back again, and gave him hospitable entertainment." Another point on which Jeremey Taylor was in advance of his age was in the rejection of the doctrine that all mankind are guilty and punishable and utterly depraved for an act of our first parents. He maintained that with all our frailties and infirmities, there are elements of good within us, and that we are all free to choose between good and evil, and that the vices and corruptions of men are from many concurrent causes. He was severely censured for this heresy of his, but he said: "My comfort is, that I have the honour to be an advocate for God's justice and goodness;" and in this advocacy neither the opposition of enemies nor the remonstrances of friends could silence him. He was also strenuous in setting forth the unreliability of death-bed repentances, in an age in which many thought it was time enough to begin to repent when the end was drawing near. He did not deny that such repentances might be sincere and deep in feeling; but, inasmuch as there was no longer any opportunity for putting them to the test, for restitution, for an amended life, they were not to be trusted. And altogether he discredited the notion that a soul can be purified, and a character transformed, by the impression of a moment; such an impression is only fit to be called a conversion, when it has led to the steady use of the proper instruments of virtue. "The counsels of religion," he said, "are not to be applied to the distempers of the soul, as men used to take hellebore; but they must dwell together with the spirit of a man, and be twisted about his understanding for ever; they must be used like nourishment, that is, by a daily care and meditation, not like a single medicine, and upon the actual pressure of a present necessity."

Though, however, there is much in his thought which is evidently far in advance of the age in which he lived, and which indicates a rare largeness of spirit, and though he spoke out bravely at whatever risk or cost to himself, still his practical and devotional works are those by which he is best known now; and these have certainly an abiding worth. Like most of his writings they are sometimes overlaid with illustration and ornament; but there are in them golden sentences, which for force and beauty cannot be surpassed. They have about them a perfection which fits them to be learnt by heart, and treasured up as choice pictures to be hung around the chambers of the soul, as jewels to be worn on its breast, as lamps to be used for daily guidance and comfort. In these golden sentences he is richer than either Barrow or Hooker, both of whom were in some respects his superiors. He has been called a prose Shakespeare; but this he was not. If anyone were, it was to my mind unquestionably Lord Bacon. But Jeremy Taylor may not be inaptly likened to Spenser, in his inexhaustible wealth of imagery, and fondness for making use of it.

Of all his practical and devotional works, the

"Holy Living and Dying" has the foremost place. I know of no work which so well illustrates the words of our text, "To live is Christ, and to die is gain." I know of no work, which a man, wishing to arm himself against temptations, to fulfil the requirements of duty, to drink deeply of the sources of life and strength, and at last to lie down to rest in peace, can better take with him, as his companion through this world.

It is not a work to be read through again and again, but to be read carefully once or twice, and *marked.* Like most old books it contains much that has become obsolete; but there are in it rules of practice, prayers, and golden sentences, sometimes reaching through pages, to be marked and recurred to and used, for a worth in them which will never pass away. Bishop Heber, in his biography mentions the chapter on Humility as the best. If I have a favourite chapter it is that on Contentment. Read that, when the vexations and troubles of life come thickly upon you, and if you are not a better and happier and even a thankful man, I believe no mortal words can help you. I might multiply passages in justification of what I have said of this book; but I have time only for one from the Holy Living, and a very short one from the Holy Dying. The first is from that chapter on Contentment, to which I have referred, and I read it not now for the first time from this place; I give it not because it is more beautiful than other passages, but because it is perhaps, the most characteristic of the whole. You will remember that it was written, not when he was in the enjoyment of Archbishop Laud's commendation and support; not after the Restoration, when he was himself elevated to a bishopric, but during those long and painful struggles in which he was imprisoned repeatedly, and obliged to maintain himself and his family as best he could: "I am fallen into the hands of publicans and sequestrators, and they have taken all from me: what now? let me look about me. They have left me the sun and moon, fire and water, a loving wife, and many friends to pity me, and some to relieve me; and I can still discourse, and unless I list they have not taken away my merry countenance, and my cheerful spirit, and a good conscience, they still have left me the Providence of God, and all the promises of the Gospel, and my religion, and my hopes of heaven, and my charity to them too; and still I sleep and digest, I eat and drink, I read and meditate, I can walk in my neighbour's pleasant fields, and see the varieties of natural beauties, and delight in all that in which God delights, that is, in virtue and wisdom, in the whole creation, and in God himself. And he that hath so many causes of joy and so great, is very much in love with sorrow and peevishness, who looses all these pleasures, and chooses to sit down upon his little handful of thorns." The few words from the second part are from the preface: "I shall carry your meditations awhile into the chambers of death, where you shall find the rooms dressed up with melancholy arts, and fit to converse with your most retired thoughts, which *begin with a sigh, and proceed in deep consideration, and end in a holy resolution.*" This is the keynote of the Holy Dying; and truly, my friends, the sigh that ends in holy resolution, is one which we shall not reget at last; it will, however, not end in that only, but also in a happiness which will endure when sorrow and sighing, shall be no more.

Morning.

By C. M. Broom.

Thro' open casement pours the morning light,
And happy bird-talk, all in little trills,
And Nature's silence lies upon the hills,
Half hidden by the silver mist from sight.

So unstain'd, yet, the record of the day,
The waving pine trees seem to bend in prayer,
A tender reverence is in the air,
The garment that the night has cast away.

No whining priest *this* fane doth consecrate,
No strife of babbling tongues declares its truth,
But worship from the world's eternal youth
Proclaims the firmanent one temple great.

Mighty of heart, mighty of mind, magnanimous—to be this is indeed to be great in life; to become this increasingly is indeed to "advance in life"—in life itself, not in the trappings of it. He only is advancing in life whose heart is getting softer, whose blood warmer, whose brain quicker, whose spirit is entering into living peace.

Patience in Our Work.*

This is an age of hurry and excitement, of nervous and restless energy. We are pressed on all sides with business which seems of the utmost importance, and we naturally complain that we have no leisure.

We are wont to look upon this state of affairs as one proceeding entirely from outside causes, over which we have no control; but it has been recently suggested to me that possibly our own impatience is at the root of our difficulty.

Impatienee may certainly lead us into many unlooked for troubles. And if we study the matter carefully we shall find that impatience will not only give to our work an inferior quality and character, but tend to lower our aims and ideals.

Impatience causes our work to be inferior in quality and character because impatience means a desire to quickly see results, and if the results of our work must be seen quickly, the tendency grows to lay most stress on that part of the work which is visible, the part that shows. As an example of this we have the scamped work of to-day; the articles made principally for outside appearance, and of little lasting value. We read the newspaper because it will give us news quickly—we have no patience to read the larger work which in the end will give us more valuable knowledge.

Impatience also lowers our aims. For if we are anxious to see the results of our efforts quickly, the work we undertake can never be a very vast one. The higher the aim, the longer must be the time before its fulfilment. At the present day a man is asked to give a proof that his idea is genuine, and he who has dreams of higher and nobler states of being—not yet distinct enough for him to give them expression—is termed an idealist, and can gain but few followers.

From these hurried strivings we turn in relief to those works which are performed in patience and quietness of soul. There is a beauty in them, and a strength and power. Think of the bronze gates on the Baptistry at Florence—they took Ghiberti thirty years to carve, and they remain to-day a striking masterpiece, and still inspire us with wonder and admiration. The great cathedral builders worked patiently and lovingly for years. Darwin spent unremitting labour in pursuing his study. On all true work we must be willing to bestow much time and thought, patiently working at each detail, yet always carrying in our minds the perfect whole, and not wishing to see results until they can be brought to their full perfection.

It is in this spirit that I think we need to come to our Sunday School work. The greatness of its aim is the thought that must first fill our minds. This aim should be the lifting of the souls of the children nearer to their true place as sons of God. For such an end we shall surely be willing to work steadily on in faith, and not grow impatient if we do not immediately see the results of our labours.

The work of education must always be a slow one. True education never hurries. We are outgrowing the idea that education means putting facts into children's heads—we are learning that the only true form of education is that which develops and trains the faculties which a child possesses. Dr. Arnold is said to have made it his aim to sow the seeds of good in the child's mind, and then to develop *that*, relying upon the fact that if the good was growing whatever was evil would of itself die away. This method holds good in every branch of life. In the physical world it is the healthy body that easiest throws off disease. We have always in our blood an army of healthy microbes or phagacites, which will, if we are healthy, themselves fight and demolish the microbes of disease.

Our work in the Sunday School, then, should consist largely of cultivating in the child's mind the love of all that is truest and best, knowing that if the mind is thus absorbed with good, evil will strive to get a place in vain.

But such a process must necessarily be a very slow one, and this is why Sunday School teachers need to be full of patience, and never expect to see the result of their work till after many years.

Then, again, the good of Sunday School work is not confined entirely to the careful training—moral and spiritual—that we may be able to give the scholars. It includes the moral influence of our own character upon the children.

* A Paper read at a Sunday School Conference.

People have smiled at the idea that the only encouragement that I have ever found myself able to give to a teacher who has had a bad Sunday afternoon is—"Never mind, you will have a better Sunday next week." But there is a deeper meaning than appears. An unsuccessful class on one Sunday does not necessarily mean failure. Children have moods—we ourselves are sometimes in a better mood than others—and Sunday School work does not depend on the teaching of one special Sunday, or of any Sunday, so much as it depends upon the spirit with which we undertake the work. The scholars appreciate the devotion of an earnest teacher. The young teacher who can bear to be sneered at for refusing to go up the river because he must be in his place with his boys on Sunday, does not obtain his influence so much by what he teaches as by the feeling that is produced in his class by witnessing the loyalty of the teacher. Boys will believe in the work and the faith of a teacher who is inspired by his faith to make such sacrifices.

What patience we need, then, in our Sunday School work, if one of the surest means of influence is the faithfulness with which we bear witness to our teaching in our daily life.

Another reason why we need to have patience is because we must remember we are but laying a foundation. We cannot in the Sunday School create the characters of men and women; we can only lay the foundation, and leave the building-up to later hands; only dig the ground, and, when the seed is planted, surround it with such influences that may best nourish it and secure its development. The wider and broader the foundation, the more carefully the ground is prepared, the more sure we may be of future success. But then, just as during the time of the foundation laying and of seed sowing, there is little result to be seen, so it is in the true work of character building. We do not strive to make model children—who will come into school without manifesting any sign of life or resistance, who will give copy-book answers and repeat passages of Scripture. If we encourage the children to be orderly and quiet in school, it is rather with the thought of the advantage that a well-ordered nature will be to them through their life. If we teach them passages of Scripture, it is that they may have their minds well stored with rich thoughts, and not with the idea that the child shall make a good show of learning.

We wish to so prepare the mind of the child that it shall *begin* to develop in the right direction. And then endeavour to perpetually increase the growth in that direction.

And so we find that if we are undertaking Sunday School work in the right spirit it is impossible for us to see results quickly.

But this need not discourage us. Having these high aims, realizing how noble is our work, how well worth our undertaking, how well worth, even, our waiting for, we come down to the daily routine with fresh hope and renewed patience.

Some afternoon the school-room is stuffy and close, the children noisy and inattentive, we have to summon up all our patience to bear with them, and find it well-nigh impossible to bring in the loving, cheerful spirit in which we believe the truest part of the work lies. But we do not despair. The fruit we are looking for is not the order and attention of that one Sunday alone—we are awaiting future results.

Or, again. Perhaps at much personal inconvenience we have persevered in our attendance, only to find the other teachers absent and the scholars indifferent. Again the goal of our efforts lies farther than this temporary time of disaffection.

And this looking ahead, this high aspiration, this patience for larger and better — though postponed—results, will not have the effect of causing us to pay less attention, but rather more, to the details of the work. The weekly routine, with its oft-repeated difficulties, becomes a weariness in itself; but if we are looking at the future we shall have patience to attend to the smaller details.

And as to results. Are we sure that Sunday School teaching does give so little return for the work done? It is true we shall not see the results in weeks or months, or even in a few years. But after that there does come the real harvest. Stories are well known of men who, in after years, have returned to thank their Sunday School teacher, and the joy of such an event covers many a disappointment. But, taking away exceptional cases, after eight or ten years progress is generally made, the results of which may be seen.

Speaking personally, these results are by no means unsatisfying. I see young men and young women who have grown up in the school, making of the school not a place of hardship or toil, but a place of joy. They come, willing to help in the work in a spirit of delight, wanting others to share in the advantages of the school that they have rejoiced in. And all in a spirit of happiness, as if their fulness of life could find vent in the schoolroom just as well as in any other less innocent place of pleasure. And I believe many here could bear witness to the same thing.

If only we will keep our aim high, the work of the Sunday School will never be superseded. It was the Church that first pointed out to the nation that in each child was a mind that must be trained. And now that we have established our National Schools, the Church should go farther and make us feel that each child has an individual soul, that must be fitted for his Father's world.

So great is this aim, that we must walk much of our way in faith, but the end is REAL. And with great LOVE for each little child, and with fervent desire in our work, we may wait patiently for Him who giveth us our heart's desires.

A. J. LAWRENCE.

Types of Service.

I.—THE SOLDIER.

Of the Soldiers of the Bible, not the least soldier-like is the Roman officer who said of himself, "I am a man under authority"—putting the fact that he was accustomed to obey before the fact that he was accustomed also to command. For, indeed, to obey orders is more characteristic of the soldier's calling than to give them; and it was the simple, manly acknowledgment of superior right, wherever found, that won for this soldier the highest distinction that soldier ever received.

The Christian profession is before all things a profession of peace—peace is its ideal—and yet not a few of its metaphors are drawn from the profession of arms. That is because the profession of arms is a service, and every type of honourable service tends to produce a type of noble character; so that we might almost say that to serve God well we need but seize the best points in the best services whereby we serve one another. A soldier's honour and a soldier's devotion are the highest expressions we have for honest pride, and for quick, unhesitating, uncalculating response to the call of duty. The pity of it is that peace hardly allows the soldier to be himself—he is made for action in the last extremity, and for opportunities which happily are rare. This is more his misfortune than his fault. A private out of barracks, or an officer off duty, is not always an exalted being, but there are forces and influences at work in his calling, his training, the rank he holds, the name he bears, even the badge he wears—there are thoughts within him of what men like him have done, and he may do,—which keep another life within him ready to leap out and make him great. Change the scene and you change the man. With the first signal for active service he is transformed. In a moment he dies to himself, in order that, if need be, he may die for his country. The rough private has now the soul of a knight, can wait, can endure, can look death in the face without flinching, and bear wounds worse than death without murmuring, can be as brave as a lion and as tender as a woman, can sell his life to save his honour, or lay it down to save a friend. The officer, whose occupation but now was little more than a pastime, is called to a leadership of men, which will try every fibre of his manhood. It is a stirring sight to see young fellows, well provided for at home, heirs very often to land and wealth and title and high position, risk them all rather than choose inglorious ease. We know how, with the very moment of some unexpected call, they are ready to take their share of hardship, and more than their share of danger. Theirs is no service forced upon them by the necessities of livelihood, nor are they needy adventurers spurred on by hope of gain; the profession of arms is to them part of the tradition of their country, of their order, of their family, and, having made their choice for better or for worse, they will throw all their bright future away, and take early death as their portion in a foreign land, in an unknown grave, rather than not take their place among men who

may be counted on to be faithful even unto death. Britain's most favoured sons have never spared themselves in fight by land or sea.

Subordination is not a favourite word with the civilian. The democratic spirit, instead of being a spirit of submission to the best form of government, has come to be very much a spirit of impatience under any. There are forms of popular government in which we are so suspicious of encroachment that we would rather have them weak, and kept down to the level of the weak, than be ourselves controlled to make them strong. To say nothing of State and municipal departments, there is scarcely a force or a service, even a church or a school, which does not suffer from lack of discipline; but the first condition of discipline is subordination. We have suffered, it is true, from dictatorship in time past, but power too nicely balanced is scarcely less dangerous. Power over those under you, limited, but protected, and responsibility to those over you, strict, but definite, these are the great secrets of successful organization. A more military spirit would save many a civic body from ruin, the spirit of one who learns to rule by first learning to obey, and can say humbly, "a man under authority," before adding proudly, "having soldiers under me."

But subordination is not everything, and the military spirit is good only to a certain point. There are words drawn from the soldier's life which are by-words. We know how long-continued military habits may lead to a certain narrowness, an over-preciseness, an over-attentiveness to detail, a too sensitive dread of change and new ideas. We are not meant only to be ordered about, or to move only in battalions, or to think only up to the bounds of our own responsibility. Life cannot be reduced to a system of drill. But the soldier-type is not the less a type of noble service—so noble, that Paul the aged, Paul the prisoner, having fought his fight, guarded by a soldier at his side, awaiting death by a soldier's hand, can still write these amongst his last words: "Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier."

E. P. Barrow.

Social Questions.

I.

THE POOR LAW.

Five years ago it was thought that the Poor Law would come under a new regime by the democratising of the method of election to the Boards of Guardians. Up to that time Guardians, in many districts, had been elected by antiquated methods and by such a limited franchise, the process was so cumbrous and the electing constituency so narrow, that the Boards were practically self-elected. Outside the reigning clique no one had a chance. Remembering how little they relied on popular support, and how seldom they appealed to public judgment, it is to their credit that their administration of the Poor Law was, on the whole, free from scandal. We give them credit for an earnest desire both to save the rates and minister to distress, although the emphasis was always placed on the former. Where they failed was in an appreciation of the necessity for Poor Law reform. Perhaps they were not to be blamed for not being statesmen, publicists, and reformers. Certainly it never seems to have dawned upon them that social distress has its new conditions as well as social wealth—conditions that can only be met by a broader and more humane administration. The public opinion of the ruling classes had laid down certain axioms and standards, which only here and there a local body had the courage and enlightenment to set aside. These axioms and standards were generally accepted as the Guardians' indisputable code of conduct, and for a long time no one thought of questioning them. Yet, after 50 years trial, this conception of

POOR LAW ADMINISTRATION HAS ENTIRELY FAILED

to extinguish pauperism and destitution. It succeeds in obviating a few cases of direct starvation; but it does not prevent a widespread demoralisation. It often fails to rescue the children from a life of pauperism, and the aged from public disgrace. More important than all, it fails utterly in its chief and most important function—of encouraging the provident and worthy, and discouraging the spendthrift and

drunkard. Slowly the conviction is growing that the whole system of Poor Law relief requires overhauling, especially with a view to a more adequate treatment of the aged poor, the sick poor, the deserving poor, and the juvenile poor. Of the need of Poor Law reform the old Boards of Guardians seem not to have had the slightest perception, while on the problem of the unemployed, on home colonisation and kindred matters, their minds appear to have been a blank. The first step forward is provided by the Parish Councils Act in rendering the election to the office of Guardian a reality instead of a sham. Household suffrage and the ballot will, in future, control the Boards of Guardians, and that is a large and direct gain to the cause of reform. Public opinion can now be brought to bear on the action of Guardians in an effective way. The "democratising" of the machinery is the preliminary move towards humanising the collective provisions of the community for its weaker members. That the new method of popular election has not as yet borne the fruit we desire to see is, we fear, due to the prevalence of the idea that Boards of Guardians are Guardians of the "rates" rather than of the "poor." Now a Guardian of the Poor is not first of all a Guardian of the rates. It is his duty to study economy, but it is his first duty to be a friend and caretaker of the less fortunate members of the community. No more honourable title, no more Christian Office could be found, if the words were properly understood, than "Guardian of the Poor." Mr. Stead has been speculating on what would happen "If Christ came to London." Well, one thing is pretty certain, that if He came and could be persuaded to take any public office at all, it would be that of Guardian of the Poor. He would find no more sacred work to His hand. Care for the poor is of the essence of Christianity. Now a great deal of our Poor Law administration needs to be Christianised. We want for our Guardians not small property owners and retired publicans, whose one idea is to protect the rates, but men of large sympathies and wide ideas, who, while carefully avoiding extravagance and waste, shall, at the same time, allow for the treatment of paupers as human beings. Above all, we should send men who are clear-eyed enough to see that

THE PROBLEM OF POVERTY

with which we are face to face at the end of the nineteenth century is very different from that which has presented itself in any previous age of England's history. The poverty that arises from causes permanent and inherent in human nature; from weakness of body, mind, or will; from accident and misfortune; from fire and flood; from wasting disease and decrepit age, must be taken into account as a persistent social fact. For a very long time to come this kind of poverty—"natural" poverty as it is called, must be recognised as inevitable. But there is a poverty for which the word "pauperism" has been invented, that must not be treated as a permanent social phenomenon. It is a comparatively new growth. It is the result of the economic and industrial conditions under which England during the last 100 years has so enormously increased her wealth. Our factory system, our innumerable inventions, our improved machinery, our fierce competitions, the fluctuating markets which afford such a field for the speculator, all these things which have built up great fortunes have also at the same time swollen the ranks of the very poor, and created a vast army of unemployed unknown to any other economic era. The continual displacement of labour that is going on drives down an increasing number into the pauper condition. It is for the new guardians to differentiate between "natural" poverty and "economic" poverty—or rather to distinguish between the poverty which we are always likely to have with us and the poverty which is due to an industrial system which as surely as it breeds the millionaire at one end of the scale breeds the pauper at the other. The new Guardian who can thus distinguish and differentiate will soon come to see that any scheme or any method of administration which aims at the abolition or diminution of the present revenue from poor rates is radically unsound. These fifteen millions sterling, virtually a share of the rental of the country, might be regarded as a part of that "ransom" which

MR. CHAMBERLAIN HAS TAUGHT US

is due from wealth to poverty, and no proposal can for a moment be admitted which contemplates the absorption of any part of this tribute

by the landlords or the middle class. The efforts of Poor Law reformers must be directed not to saving the rates but to their better administration. What we have been learning since 1834 is that discrimination must be more and more exercised between *classes* of the poor, not between individual cases, and that any Poor Law reform must necessarily proceed on this basis. We have hitherto been so impressed with the danger of increasing the number of the shiftless poor that we have managed to exercise a degrading and demoralising influence on those persons, many times more numerous, whose poverty is their misfortune rather than their fault, or who have been reduced to want by the exigencies of our economic, social, and industrial system. We must now try a bolder and, at the same time, more humane experiment.

JOSEPH WOOD.

"The Helper," 1900.*

A critic might perhaps find fault with the title of this useful little book. "THE Helper" sounds rather universal, and would be a proud name for the biggist cyclopædia in the world. We are relieved, however, to find that "The Helper" does not profess to take the whole range of human life and wants under its care, but is just a handbook for "Sunday School Teachers and Parents." Even here criticism will thrust in its pert enquiry and asks "What is a Sunday School Parent?" But these pin-point faults do not detract from the solid value of Miss Pritchard's annual contribution towards the religious training of our children whether in the home or the school. The present volume is largely made up of the papers read at the "Summer School," for Sunday School Teachers, held at Oxford, in June, 1899. Every one connected with that experiment is to be congratulated on its success. It was the most remarkable and satisfactory set of meetings ever held in connection with our schools, and although an annual repetition of the meetings may not be possible or advisable, we trust that biennial gatherings may come within the range of practical politics. Such meetings, attended by such numbers must result in a great quickening of interest in Sunday school work, and in raising the standards and ideals of the teachers. Miss Pritchard, to whom so much of the first success is due, must feel proud of the army of helpers she gathered together at Oxford, and at the spirit and enthusiasm which kept the meeting's, papers, and discussions up to such a high level of excellence. The reports of meetings and papers read occupy more than two-thirds of the new "Helper," and will repay the careful study of all interested in Sunday school instruction. We would especially call attention to the papers by Mr. Frank Taylor, Mr. Rawlings, and Miss Edith Drummond as of a directly practical nature in the management of a class and in the giving of a lesson. From the nature of the case there could not but be a certain amount of overlapping in the papers as they were read at Oxford, since they were prepared by the speakers without consultation with each other, and we think the editor might have exercised a larger discretion by way of omitting repetitions of the same counsels and suggestions. The papers are all good and distinctive, but when read in the cold light of the printed page, it is seen that parts of them cover very much the same ground. But the feast is so good that we ought not to complain if the same dishes come round twice to the assembled guests.

We cannot say that the rest of the volume strikes us as of any great value. There is indeed a beautiful New Year's address by Mr. Byles, which is exactly what an address to children ought to be. Mr. Frank Walter's lessons on "The Parable of the Sower," are rather suggestions of subjects than lessons, and what the ordinary teacher wants in a lesson-scheme is the detailed method of treating a subject. The 50 pages of "Sunday Readings for the Year" might have been better filled with Lesson Schemes, such as the Sunday School Union provides for our orthodox friends, but from the liberal point of view. So much that is put into the hands of our teachers is vague and general. Let Miss Pritchard persuade some of her helpers to give us sets of lessons on the five-step method, so admirably expounded by Miss Edith Drummond, and the next volume will be even more valuable than the one we so gratefully welcome for 1900.

* London, Sunday School Association, Essex Hall.

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

The Child-Mother.

Heavily lay the warm sunlight
Upon the green blades shining bright,
An outspread grassy sea;
She, through the burnished yellow flowers,
Went walking in the golden hours
That slept upon the lea.

The bee went past her with a hum;
The merry gnats did go and come
In complicated dance;
Like a blue angel, to and fro,
The splendid dragon-fly did go,
Shot like a seeking glance.

She never followed them, but still
Went forward with a quiet will,
That got, but did not miss;
With gentle step she passed along,
And once a low, half-murmured song
Uttered her share of bliss.

It was a little maiden-child,
You see, not frolicsome and wild,
As such a child should be;
For though she was just nine, no more,
Another little child she bore,
Almost as big as she.

With tender care of straining arms,
She kept it circled from all harms,
With face turned from the sun;
For in that perfect tiny heart,
The mother, sister, nurse had part,
Her womanhood begun.

At length they reach an ugly ditch,
The slippery, sloping bank of which
Flowers and long grasses line;
Some ragged-robins baby spied,
And spread his little arms out wide,
As he had found a mine.

What baby wants, that baby has;
A law unalterable as—
The poor shall serve the rich;
She kneeleth down with eager eyes,
And, reaching far out for the prize,
Topples into the ditch.

And slanting down the bank she rolled,
But in her little bosom's fold
She clasps the baby tight;
And in the ditch's muddy flow.
No safety sought by letting go
At length she stands upright.

Alas! her little feet are wet;
Her new shoes, how can she forget?
And yet she does not cry.
Her scanty frock of dingy blue,
Her petticoat wet through and through!
But baby is quite dry.

And baby laughs, and baby crows;
And baby being right, she knows
That nothing can be wrong;
And so with troubled heart, yet stout,
She plans how ever to get out,
With meditations long.

The bank is higher than her head,
And slippery, too, as I have said;
And what to do with baby?
For even the monkey, when he goes,
Needs both his fingers and his toes—
She is perplexed as may be.

But all her puzzling was no good,
Though staring up the bank she stood,
Which, as she sunk, grew higher;
Until, invaded with dismay,
Lest baby's patience should give way,
She frees her from the mire.

And up and down the ditch, not glad,
But patient, she did promenade;
Splash! splash! went her poor feet,
And baby thought it rare good fun,
And did not want it to be done;
And the ditch flowers were sweet.

But, oh! the world that she had left,
The meads from her so lately reft,
An infant Proserpine,
Lay like a fabled land above,
A paradise of sunny love,
In warmth and light divine.

While, with the hot sun overhead,
She her low, watery way did tread,
'Mid slimy weeds and frogs;
While now and then from distant field,
The sound of laughter faintly pealed,
Or bark of village dogs.

And once the ground began to shake
And her poor little heart to quake
For fear of added woes;
Till, looking up, at last, perforce,
She saw the head of a huge horse
Go past upon its nose.

And with a sound of tearing grass,
And puffing breath that awful was,
And horns of frightful size,
A cow looked through the broken hedge,
And gazed down on her from the edge,
With great big Juno eyes.

And so the sun went on and on,
And cow and horns and horse were gone,
And still no help came near;
Till at the last she heard the sound
Of humane footsteps on the ground,
And then she cried, "I'm here!"

It was a man, much to her joy,
Who looked amazed at girl and boy,
And reached his hand so strong.
"Give me the child," he said; but no,
She would not let the baby go,
She had endured so long.

So, with a smile at her alarms,
He stretched down both his lusty arms
And lifted them together;
And, having thanked her helper, she
Did hasten homeward painfully,
Wet, in the sunny weather.

At home at length, lo! scarce a speck
Was on the child from heel to neck,
Though she was sorely mired;
Nor gave she sign of grief's unrest,
Till, hid upon her mother's breast,
She wept till she was tired.

And, intermixed with sobbing wail,
She told her mother all the tale,—
"But"—here her wet cheeks glow—
"Mother, I did not, through it all,
"I did not once let baby fall—
"I never let him go."

Ah me! if on this star-world's face,
We men and women had like grace
To bear and shield each other;
Our race would soon be young again,
Its heart as free of ache and pain
As that of this Child-Mother.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

For the New Year.

Welcome, New Year! with corn and sickle come;
Make poor the body, but make rich the heart:
What man that bears his sheaves, gold-nodding, home,
Will heed the paint rubbed from his groaning cart!

Hints ever haunt me of a more beyond;
I am rebuked by a sense of the incomplete,
Of a completion over-soon assumed,—
Of adding up too soon.—*Clough.*

The Past is something, but the Present more;
Will it not, too, be past? Nor fail withal
To recognise the Future in your hopes;
Unite them in your manhood, each and all,
Nor mutilate the perfectness of life!
You can remember; you can also hope.—*Clough.*

Forward out of darkness; Forward into light.

Our only greatness is that we aspire!

If every year we would root out one vice, we should sooner become perfect men.—*Thos. à Kempis.*

Man must pass from old to new,
From vain to real, from mistake to fact,
From what once seemed good, to what now proves best;
How could man have progression otherwise?
—*Browning.*

Onward and upward still our way,
With the joy of progress day by day;
Nearer and nearer every year
To the visions and hopes most true and dear.

Learn the mystery of Progression duly,
Do not call each glorious change decay;
But know we only hold our treasures truly
When it seems as if they pass'd away!
Nor dare to blame God's gifts for incompleteness!
In that want their beauty lies; they roll towards
Some infinite depth of love and sweetness,
Bearing onward man's reluctant soul.—*A. Procter.*

Ends accomplished turn to means.—*Browning.*

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be.
The last of life for which the first was made;
Our trials are in His hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned;"
Youth shows but help; trust God, see all, nor be afraid.
—*Browning.*

He sins against this life who slights the next.

The times are great! What times are little? To the sentinel that hour is regal when *he* mounts on guard.
—*Geo. Eliot.*